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**STATE ANNOUNCES PLANS FOR IMPROVEMENTS AT PILGRIM MEMORIAL
STATE PARK AND FRAZIER PIER IN PLYMOUTH**

BOSTON—The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) today announced plans for improvements at Pilgrim Memorial State Park and Frazier State Pier located on Water Street in Plymouth. Work will include improvements to enhance the safety of the pier, planning and design for rehabilitation of the Plymouth Rock Portico and general landscape work.

“DCR recognizes the value of Plymouth Rock as a nationally significant cultural resource,” said Commissioner Stephen H. Burrington, “The investment of \$500,000 at Pilgrim Memorial State Park is a major step toward rehabilitating this flagship facility of the Massachusetts State Parks system.”

Plymouth Rock and other nearby sites such as the *Mayflower II* and Plimoth Plantation are among the most popular tourist destinations in Massachusetts, attracting over a million visitors annually. In 2007, major celebrations and events are planned to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the arrival of the *Mayflower II*, which is docked at the Frazier State Pier in Pilgrim Memorial State Park.

“I am elated that we are putting the appropriate resources into preserving this historic structure,” said State Representative Vinny deMacedo. “Plymouth Rock symbolizes the perseverance of our founding fathers, and the birth of this great nation.”

In preparation for upcoming events, DCR plans to undertake an estimated \$350,000 of improvements at the Frazier State Pier, including replacing fender piles, selected deck timber and bringing all handrails up to current safety standards. This work is being funded by the Rivers and Harbors Program of the DCR Office of Waterways. Design for the project is completed and the pier improvements are expected to begin in March and be completed by the end of May.

DCR is also in the design phase for the rehabilitation of the Plymouth Rock Portico. The Neo-Classical Revival structure was built 1921 to shelter Plymouth Rock and was designed by the highly influential architectural firm of McKim, Mead and White. The Portico was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1970.

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For several years, DCR has maintained a protective net to catch ceiling tiles which were falling as the result of water flowing through the deteriorating mortar joints, causing the steel beams to rust and expand. The flow of water and resulting steel beam rust caused the dome tiles to stain, separate and detach. The design will lead to the rehabilitation of the Portico, which will involve repairing past damage from water infiltration, stopping current deterioration, and preventing future damage to the structure. Work will include exterior cleaning, mortar repairs, cleaning rust from interior steel and in kind replacement of terra cotta ceiling tiles. The result will be a more stable but visibly unchanged portico.

The design phase of the Portico preservation project began in November 2006. Testing and analysis, scheduled for December 2006 and January 2007, requires the removal of a small amount of mortar from the ceiling to expose the interior steel support beam and opening of three test areas on the roof. The steel support will be tested and results analyzed to determine the scope of the repair work, which will be incorporated into the final design documents. Public access to the Portico will be limited during the testing phase.

As an added precaution, DCR is considering installation of a state-of-the-art, rust-prevention system called “cathodic protection” (CP). CP involves the application of a safe, mild electrical current to the structural steel, which halts the chemical process that causes oxidization (rust). This method has been proven effective in protecting pipelines and ships, but is a relatively new method of preventing the deterioration of historic structures in Europe and the United States. Testing will determine the best way to apply the CP technology at the Portico.

DCR expects to complete the pier improvements, testing and design for the Portico, and landscaping work by June 1, in time for the 50th anniversary of the *Mayflower II*'s arrival.

The design phase of the project will cost approximately \$50,000. DCR has contracted with Bargmann Hendrie + Archetype (BH+A) of Boston to lead the design effort. Preliminary estimates for the rehabilitation of the Portico total \$375,000, but final costs are dependent on the results of testing and analysis and further design development. DCR has listed the Portico rehabilitation as a priority project in its FY 2008 capital planning. Once funded, the work will require that the Portico be closed for approximately two months.

Additional information on Pilgrim Memorial State Park and the Plymouth Rock Portico preservation plan is available on DCR's website at www.mass.gov/dcr.

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